

Fed Executive Service file

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# The Federal Spotlight

BY JOSEPH YOUNG  
Staff Writer

**NOT COOL BUT HOT**  
Nathan Wolkomir, president of the National Federation of Federal Employees, says press reports that federal unions are "cool" to the administration's proposal for a new federal executive service are gross understatements.

The NFFE is hotly opposed to the plan that would subject federal careerists in supergrade jobs to three-year contract renewals subject to the pleasure of their agencies.

Wolkomir said the plan would result in political patronage being the order of the day in top

federal career jobs and eventually would permeate the entire government service.

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# *Opposition Slight to Executive Plan*

By  
Mike  
Causey



The White House plan to shake up the hiring-firing system for top career government executives may become law due to a lack of organized interest.

At the first Capitol Hill hearing yesterday on the proposed Federal Executive Service (FES), nobody had much to say except Civil Service Chairman Robert E. Hampton. He said—18 pages worth—that it is a good idea.

The FES would eventually take in about 7,000 of the government's top-grade careerists in the \$28,129 and upward pay range. It would abolish grades as such, and permit executives to be rotated between agencies on an as-needed basis, and paid according to ability.

All members of the FES would be put under three-year contracts to their agencies. If Uncle Sam failed to renew, they could bounce back to Grade 15 (\$24,251-\$31,528), or retire.

Hampton, whose agency allocates only 2,700 of the slots to other activities under a "pool" arrangement, said that is not a very good way to run a business. The FES plan

would do away with job "quotas" now assigned to agencies by law. Each year they would have to justify how many of the top jobs they needed and CSC would have the final say—with an unofficial assist from the Office of Management and Budget.

Lawmakers who are studying the proposal are particularly interested in the contract aspect. Many have complained that "supergrade" status is a lifetime job guarantee and Hampton more or less agreed.

"We have the means of dealing with outright incompetence," Hampton said, "but mediocrity remains a problem. A single weak executive can nullify the efforts of hundreds of lower-grade employees, can stall a program activity or void a whole train of research, and, can, on the weakest-link principle, jeopardize an entire program."

Senators at the hearing asked a few polite questions. But they generally seemed more interested in how the system could be implemented, rather than in opposing it outright.

Employee unions—while editorializing about the dangers of the FES—have been strangely silent. Only two professional groups have asked for equal time to testify, and most of the unions, which draw their strength from rank-and-file people, plan only to file a statement for the record.

Hearings before the House

Manpower Subcommittee are expected to produce more fireworks. Both Republican and Democratic members fear that politics could enter into the selection, and rejection, of FES members. But somebody—or a lot of somebodies—are going to have to make more noise than they did yesterday if they have honest doubts about the program.

Alvin Lucchi, a retired Army lieutenant colonel, has joined Customs as assistant director for training and career development. He had worked for both Army and Navy.

Sen. William Spong (R-Va.) will hand out awards today at Federal Editors Association's luncheon session at the Mayflower.

Robert W. Fri., a management consultant, will soon be nominated to be deputy director of the Environmental Protection Agency, according to Environmental Health Letter. EHL also reports that Dr. Vernon E. Wilson, head of Health Services and Mental Health Administration will leave July 1 to become president of the University of Missouri.

Nicholas J. Oganovic, retiring director of the Civil Service Commission, has been given the first meritorious service award by the Council of Federal Medical Directors.

**Mayday Damage:** Federal workers who had their cars damaged during last week's traffic tieup efforts will have to work out claims with their insurance companies. Uncle

Sam will not pay for losses suffered by employees who had tires slashed, wiring ripped out, or their cars unintentionally used as roadblocks; exceptions would be persons on government ordered travel.

Workers who were personally injured, however, are eligible for benefits from Labor's Bureau of Employees Compensation. Those who think they have a legitimate claim should present it to BEC.

**Administrative Assistant:** Federal City College wants one, \$8,582 to \$10,470 to start. Contact Mrs. Phillips in personnel.

**Land of Rape and Honey:** Postmasters' Gazette says the town of Tisdale, Saskatchewan, has applied for that postmark cancellation. The area is a major producer of rape seed (for bird food) and honey. The Gazette says the Canadian government "may think the whole idea is for the birds."

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